

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

Claims 1-7 (Previously Canceled)

Claim 8 (Cancel)

Claims 9-18 (Previously Canceled)

Claim 19 (New) An improved universal fork, comprising:

a head portion, a handle portion and a finger platform portion connecting between the head portion and the handle portion,

the handle portion including a shaft portion and a grip portion, the grip portion disposed opposite the finger platform portion and the shaft portion connecting between the finger platform portion and the grip portion, the grip portion having an enlarged end opposite the handle portion for providing a counter weight to the head portion of the fork, the enlarged end of the grip portion having an enlarged width and an enlarged depth adapted for fitting and pressing against the palm of the hand of a person,

the head portion including at least one inner fork tine and at least two outer fork tines, the at least one inner fork tine having a generally elongated shape suitable for a fork tine, the outer fork tines having curved outer edges when viewed from a top view perspective, the outer edges of the outer fork tines including beveled outside edges suitable for cutting food the head and the tines also having a curved shape when viewed from a side view perspective, the outside tines having a generally symmetrical configuration suitable for use in cutting by either a left handed or right handed person,

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

the finger platform portion disposed between the head of the fork and the handle portion having two generally symmetrical flattened surfaces for receiving finger pressure, the flattened surfaces oriented generally parallel to each other and are oriented at a right angle in relation to the width of the handle portion to present generally widened flat surfaces when viewed from a side view perspective, the two generally symmetrical and opposite finger platform surfaces for receiving pressure from the finger of a right handed or left handed person, one of the two finger platform surfaces thereby allowing the application of cutting pressure upon the curved outer edges of the outer tines for cutting of a food item by either a left handed or right handed person.

Claim 20 (New) The improved universal fork of claim 19, wherein;

the outside edges of the outside tines of the head portion follow symmetrical arcual paths wherein for each outside tine, a first vector tangent to the arcual path at the base of the head portion and a second vector tangent to the arcual path at the end of the tine define an angle of curvature that is greater than 30 degrees and less than 90 degrees.

Claim 21 (New) The improved universal fork of claim 19, wherein;

the outside edges of the outside tines of the head portion follow symmetrical arcual paths wherein for each outside tine, a first vector tangent to the arcual path at the base of the head portion and a second vector tangent to the arcual path at the end of the tine define an angle of curvature that is greater than 32 degrees and less than 47 degrees.